

LA FLECHA HOUSE  
603A La Flecha  
Rancho Santa Fe  
San Diego  
California

HABS NO. CA-2304

HABS  
CAL  
37-RANEF  
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF DRAWINGS

Historic American Building Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LA FLECHA HOUSE

HABS No. CA-2304

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Location: 6036 La Flecha, at the corner of Via de Santa Fe, Rancho Santa Fe, San Diego County, California. Rancho Santa Fe Block G, lot 7. San Diego County parcel number 266-285-06.

UTM zone 11, easterly 481130, northerly 3653240

Present Owner: Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society

Present Occupant and Use: architectural and other offices

Significance: Built by the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company in 1923 as employee housing, and designed by resident architect Lilian Rice, this was the first residence to be erected in the Civic Center of Rancho Santa Fe. An all-electric building, it also housed Rancho Santa Fe's first public library in 1924.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1923
2. Architect: Lilian Jenette Rice
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: Chain of ownership taken from Assessment Records, Santa Fe Irrigation District, Rancho Santa Fe, and Santa Fe Land Improvement Company Deed Records, Collection Reginald M. Clotfelter:

1922-23 lot 7, Block C owned by the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company

5/14/23 A. B. Harlan, Redlands, California (sales contract C-20)

1930-1937 Nancy Irene Harlan, Redlands, California

1938 Paul H. Avery

1943 Ida May Moore

10/4/45 Alice Z. Tucker

11/17/54 Paul L. Perry

10/16/56 Mae R. Perry

4/28/61 Robert C. and Kathryn T. McReynolds

3/10/65 Security First Bank of San Diego

9/16/66 Edwin L. and Marguerita W. Reitz

8/12/88 Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society

4. Original plans and construction: Although no original plans for this structure have been found, four preliminary sketches which include this structure have been located. The drawings are undated and unsigned, although they are by the hand of Lilian Rice, and probably date to early 1922. The first is an aerial perspective of Blocks F and C in the Civic Center of Rancho Santa Fe. The second, more detailed drawing is of the Paseo Delicias and Via de Santa Fe streetscapes of Block G. Copies of these two drawings are included as supplemental material to HABS No. CA-2306 A, pp. 8 and 9. The third sketch is of the La Flecha streetscape of Blocks F and G, seen from the east. The fourth, published in the February 1924 Architect and Engineer to accompany an article by Lee Shippey, is a small sketch of the La Granada elevation. Copies of these latter two drawings are included here as supplemental material.

The first drawing shows the La Flecha house in the northeast corner of the eastern half of Block G. It appears as a one-story, cubic structure, with two windows on both the south and west facades. The west facade also has a small projecting entry porch. The roof is flat with a parapet. The building is enclosed on the north and east sides by a wall, and, along with two other small homes in the southeast and northwest corners of the block, faces the landscaped interior courtyard. (Neither of the other two residences shown in this sketch were built.)

The second drawing shows what is perhaps the La Flecha House at the extreme left. It shows a faintly drawn cubic structure, with a small window facing Via de Santa Fe. The third sketch is the most revealing. Here, the La Flecha facade is shown to be the primary elevation, with the main entrance accessed by a set of stairs placed parallel to the street. The arched front door, set in the middle of the facade, is topped with a canopy. Flanking it are two windows of different size. On the northeast facade, three openings are visible. The structure is again shown to be small and cubic, surrounded by a low wall which curves at the street corner. A gate to the right of the house presumably leads into a small patio.

Only the fourth sketch accurately depicts the actual original exterior appearance of the La Flecha House as recorded in early views. (However, the first three drawings do anticipate the most

noteworthy characteristic of the house as it was built; that is, its stark, cubic appearance.) The fourth drawing, as well as early photographs, show that the building was basically rectangular, with a lower projecting bay to the southeast. The entrance, reached by a four-step stoop placed parallel to the street, was on the north bay of the La Flecha facade, through a segmentally arched door topped with a bracketed canopy and Spanish tile above. There were three other openings on this facade, (from north to south): a six-light casement window; a three-light fixed sash flanked by two three-light casements; and, on the projecting bay, a small window with a decorative wooden grill. Connected to the projecting bay, to the south along La Flecha, was an arched opening allowing access to the rear of the building. On the northeast facade were two windows of unknown description. On the southwest facade were at least two windows of unknown description. An approximately 6' high wall connected with the front stoop and curved around the corner of the lot, presumably enclosing a patio.

Although there are no original floor plans, the original spatial arrangement in the La Flecha House has been schematically recreated by Charles Nelson, whose family were the first to reside in the house. (See supplemental material.)

5. Alterations and additions: The house has been substantially altered over time. The window on the projecting bay on the front facade has been lengthened, and the wooden grill replaced by an iron one. The other two windows on the front facade were replaced with French doors. The entrance has been expanded: the stoop and steps were replicated below the larger French doors, and a shed roof, supported by wooden piers, added above the entrance bays. On the northeast corner of the building, the wall was removed and a shed-roofed room added. All of the original doors and windows have been replaced. The arched gate, which allowed access to the rear of the building, and the entire wall enclosing the lot have been replaced. The original floor plan has been somewhat modified: a wall has been added between the original living room and dining room; the utility room was turned into a bathroom; the closets in the north bedroom were removed, and a new entryway to that room was created; a projecting rear entry porch was added beyond the south bedroom; the closets were removed from the south bedroom. All the original hardware, heating, plumbing, and electrical systems have been replaced or removed. A fireplace and chimney were added to what was originally the living room. Because the building has had many owners and many uses, it is difficult to date the alterations and additions. However, it is known that many of them were made in 1966, after the property was acquired by Edwin and Marguerita Reitz. In 1991, plans are being prepared to restore the house to its 1923 appearance.

- B. Historical context: This building was the first residence built in Rancho Santa Fe by the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company, for use by employees and their families. The first residents were Sidney R. Nelson, project accountant, his wife Ruth, and their young son Charles. Charles Nelson's reminiscences are attached to this report as supplemental information; they provide the most complete historical context of the La Flecha House.

Briefly summarized, the historical significance of this house is threefold: it was the first residence in Rancho Santa Fe; it housed Rancho Santa Fe's first public library; and it was an all-electric house. This innovative feature was an indication of the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company's desire to provide modern facilities in Rancho Santa Fe.

By late 1925, when the Nelsons left this house (they had just purchased a rowhouse on Paseo Delicias, documented as HABS no. CA-2311), it had been purchased by A. B. Harlan, of Redlands, California. Harlan, who also owned other property in Rancho Santa Fe, including numerous lots in Block 17, was an absentee landlord, and the La Flecha House continued to be occupied by a succession of young families who worked on the ranch, or who were building their own homes, and required convenient housing. By 1966, when the property was acquired by Edwin and Marguerita Reitz, the building had been converted into retail and office space. In 1988, the Reitzes donated the property to the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society for future use as a museum and archival space. In 1989, the La Flecha House was designated Rancho Santa Fe Local Landmark #1 by the Historical Society.

Because this structure has had so many different owners and inhabitants, and because it was the first residence built on the street, it has become known, for the lack of a better name, as the "La Flecha House."

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The La Flecha House is notable for its cubic, stripped-down exterior appearance, reminiscent of the works of the architect Irving Gill. It also represents Lilian Rice's first attempt in Rancho Santa Fe to create a compact yet architecturally distinguished residence based on the example of Spanish vernacular structures.
2. Condition of Fabric: The condition of the building, while severely altered from its original condition, remains good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This one-story, two-bedroom building, with overall dimensions of 39'-9" x 31'-5", is asymmetrical in plan and facade. The building has 1244 square feet of living space, and a large enclosed patio on the northeast corner of the property.
2. Foundations: Poured concrete foundation.
3. Walls: Adobe brick with stucco and paint over.
4. Structural system: Load-bearing adobe brick walls.
5. Stoops: The original concrete four-step front stoop, now tiled over, remains at the north entryway on the La Flecha facade. A matching stoop has been added, facing the original one.
6. Chimneys: There are no original fireplaces or chimneys in this structure. A fireplace and chimney were added in the original living room before 1966.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: On the La Flecha facade, the original arched doorway was topped by a bracketed canopy with Spanish tile above. The door was deeply recessed, and of unknown description. It has since been replaced. All other original doorways and doors are not visible in early views and thus remain of unknown description.
  - b. Windows: On the La Flecha facade, the original windows were as follows, from north to south: a recessed six-light casement; a recessed three-light fixed sash with flanking three-light casements; a small window of unknown type with a decorative wooden grill (on the projecting bay). On the north facade, there were two deeply recessed windows of unknown type. On the south facade, there were at least two windows of unknown type. On the east facade, the number and description of the original windows is unknown. All original windows have been replaced or removed.
8. Roof: The roof shape is flat with parapet, covered with asphalt and built-up roofing. The shed roof over the La Flecha facade and the single-pitch roof over the addition on the north of the house are not original to the structure.
9. Decorative features: Original decorative wooden window grill on projecting bay, now removed.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The original first-floor plan is recreated according to the reminiscences of Charles Nelson. On the La Flecha side of the property were a living room, dining room, and (in the projecting bay) kitchen with attached utility room. In the back were two bedrooms flanking a bathroom.
2. Flooring: The original flooring is unknown, but presumably narrow board oak. Flooring is now replacement wooden board and carpet.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Original wall and ceiling finish unknown, but presumably plaster and paint. All original wall and ceiling finish now replaced.
4. Openings: Original interior doorways and doors unknown, and all have been altered or removed. Original windows replaced or removed.
5. Decorative feature and trim: Any original decorative features and trim unknown.
6. Hardware: Zinc laundry sink in utility room now removed.
7. Mechanical equipment: All original electrical equipment, used for lighting, water and room heating, and cooking, has been removed or replaced. Original plumbing has also been removed or replaced.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is located on the northeast corner of Block C in the Civic Center of Rancho Santa Fe. It faces southeast onto La Flecha, and northeast onto Via de Santa Fe.
2. Historic landscape design: There is a patio on the northeast corner of the lot. It has been retiled and relandscaped, and it is unknown how much of the present garden is original. The original approximately 6' high painted adobe wall which enclosed this patio has been replaced with a 9' high wall of whitewashed concrete block, with a wooden, latched gate. The original arched opening, which led from La Flecha to the rear of the building, has been replaced by a wooden, latched gate.
3. Outbuildings: There is a 12' x 27' concrete block outbuilding at the northwest corner of the lot, used as an office.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings:

Preliminary sketches for Block G, Blocks G and F, and rear Blocks C and F, Civic Center, Rancho Santa Fe. Unsigned and undated. Location of originals unknown. Photographs of sketches in the collection of University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Sinnard, L. G. Rancho Santa Fe: California - Yesterday and Today (Chula Vista: Denrich Press, n.d. [1923?], rear page has a copy of Rice's drawing of the rear of Blocks G and F.

Shippey, Lee. "Rancho Santa Fe - California's Perfectly Planned Community." Architect and Engineer 76 (February 1924): 55-63. Reprint. n.p., n.d.

B. Early Views:

Photographs, San Diego Historical Society.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Nelson, Charles. "Early History of the La Flecha House, 1923-1925." 1988. Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society Archives.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Clotfelter, Connie. Echoes of Rancho Santa Fe. Rancho Santa Fe: Conreg, 1985.

Eddy, Lucinda Liggett. "Lilian Jeanette Rice: The Lady as Architect." M.A. Thesis, University of San Diego, 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Lilian Jenette Rice: Search For A Regional Ideal." Journal of San Diego History 29 (Fall 1983): 262-285.

Gebhard, David, and Robert Winter. A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California. Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine Smith, 1977.

"Rancho Santa Fe Historical Landmark Number One." Brochure, Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society, 1990.

Rice, Lilian J. "More Building in 1928 than ever Before." Rancho Santa Fe Progress 1 no. 7 (January 1928): 11, 14.



E. Supplemental Material:

Page 9: Preliminary sketch for rear of blocks G and F, Civic Center, Rancho Santa Fe. Unsigned and undated, but in the hand of Lilian Rice. Location of originals unknown. Photographs of sketches in the collection of the University Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Page 10: Lee Shippey, "Rancho Santa Fe - California's Perfectly Planned Community," Architect and Engineer 76 (February 1924): 55.

Page 11: Charles Nelson, "Early History of the La Flecha House, 1923-1925," 1988.

Prepared by: Lauren Farber  
HABS Project Historian  
Rancho Santa Fe, CA  
June 1991

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society, Inc. and Rancho Santa Fe Association. Under the direction of Robert J. Kapsch, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), and Paul Dolinsky, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey and Project Leader, the documentation was completed in the HABS field office at Rancho Santa Fe, California during the Summer of 1991 by Professor John P. White (Texas Tech University), Project Supervisor; Architectural Technicians Sheri L. Bonstelle (Columbia University); Juan Tampe (Catholic University of America); Piotr Trebacz (Warsaw University of Technology, Poland, U.S./I.C.O.M.O.S.); E. Matthew Walter (University of Hawaii at Manoa); and Architectural Historian Lauren Farber, Sally Kress Tompkins Fellow (University of Delaware).





EARLY HISTORY OF THE LA FLECHA HOUSE

1923 - 1925

Charles R Nelson, Colonel USAF (Ret)

The property which is described herein as "the La Flecha House" is a residence fronting on La Flecha and located at the northwesterly corner of La Flecha and Via de Santa Fe in the village center of Rancho Santa Fe, San Diego County, California. This house, designed by Lillian Rice, was constructed by the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company, a subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railroad, in 1923 as part of the first buildings to be erected in the village center. I am informed by the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society that the property is now owned by Bud and Marguerita Reitz, and that the Society intends to apply for designation of the property as a California State Historical Landmark. With this in mind, I set forth the early history of the house to the best of my recollection.

In 1906, the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company, mentioned hereafter as the Company, purchased an 8,824.7 acre tract in San Diego County which had been granted in 1845 to Juan Maria Osuna, former alcalde of the Pueblo of San Diego, by the Mexican Government. The Company's intent was to plant this tract to eucalyptus trees for use as railroad ties, a venture which proved to be unsuccessful. The property was then leased for dry farming and cattle grazing, its only productive use as water was not then available.

In 1919, W. E. Hodges, a vice president of the railroad, concluded agreements with William G. Henshaw and Colonel Ed Fletcher which led to the construction of Hodges Dam on the San Dieguito River watershed and to the formation of the Santa Fe Irrigation District. This made water available to the tract which had been named Rancho Santa Fe and to the nearby community of Solana Beach. Mr Hodges then planned a country estate development for Rancho Santa Fe with L. G. Sinnard as project manager.

After initial surveys and soil studies, the ranch was subdivided into homesite parcels with surrounding acreage sufficient for orchard planting in most instances, these surrounding a small village center with space provided for a guest house, Company offices, shops, and homes. All parcels were to be sold subject to deed restrictions which limited land use, set minimum cost specifications for homes and other buildings, and required company approval of intended architectural designs. The Company, together with the Santa Fe Irrigation District, undertook the work of road construction and pipe line installation necessary for the development.

To ensure conformance to the Spanish colonial and Mediterranean architecture which the Company wished, the firm of Requa and Jackson was engaged to provide architectural advice, and Lillian Rice, an associate of the firm, became the project's resident architect. To prepare for this, she visited Spain to familiarize herself with architecture there.

After Hodges Dam had been completed and preliminary surveys had been finished, the Company established a temporary project headquarters at the Osuna home on Via de la Valle in 1922, then moved to a permanent headquarters in the village center when its offices there were completed in 1923.

My father, Sidney R. Nelson, had been associated with the H. N. Savage Construction company of San Diego for several years before this during which he had been involved with construction of the first air field on North Island, a World War I Army camp built on Kearney Mesa, and construction of dams built at Lower Otay, Barrett, and Henshaw. My mother, Ruth Roberts Nelson, and I had lived with father in the construction camps at Lower Otay and Barrett, but then moved to San Diego to enable me to attend school there.

In early 1922, father joined the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company at Rancho Santa Fe in the Osuna house headquarters as assistant to Mr Sinnard, project manager. Among many other matters, he completed arrangements for a school to be opened in the village center for the 1923-24 school term. In July 1923, mother and I joined him in Rancho Santa Fe to become the first occupants of the La Flecha house in the village. We remained in this house until the latter part of 1925, then moved to a home which father had purchased in the village on Paseo Delicias, a residence now owned by Mrs Emma Jane Worstell.

To the best of my knowledge, the La Flecha house was the first family home designed by Lillian Rice and built according to Company specifications to be occupied in Rancho Santa Fe. Further, in late 1923 or early 1924, the La Flecha house became the site of Rancho Santa Fe's first public library, opened in the house by my mother through arrangements with the San Diego County Library.

In July 1923, the only completed buildings in the village center were the guest house, the La Flecha house, Company offices, a service station, and some small buildings extending beyond the service station along Paseo Delicias, one of which became the first village schoolroom in October 1923. The area between the Company's offices and the La Flecha house was used by U. L. Voris, an orchard contractor, for equipment storage. The area where offices of the irrigation district were constructed later was used for pipe line and road construction equipment. This included a blacksmith's shop where tools were repaired, a fascinating place for me.

None of the village streets or ranch roads were surfaced -- this did not come until 1929. After heavy rains, the Company dispatched a tractor to smooth out ruts with a heavy wood drag. In the dry season, a truck with a water tank sprinkled the village streets daily to keep the dust wetted down. In those early years, most of us who made up the very few youngsters on the ranch went barefoot in the summer, at least until our parents caught up with us. We delighted in running along after the sprinkler truck but were strictly forbidden to come in the house with muddy feet.

Many of the early California homes were built with adobe brick, and a few of the early buildings on the ranch, including the La Flecha house, were constructed with this material. The bricks were made on site of adobe clay mixed with straw, packed into wood forms and then sun-dried. Outer walls were rough plastered on the exterior and smooth plastered on the interior. Interior partition walls consisted of wood frames and were plastered over wood lath. Because the bricks were laid side by side, outer walls were quite thick and provided good insulation. Roof design was either flat, surrounded by parapet walls, or pitched with curved red tile surfacing.

Floor joists were set on piers, and flooring was either pine or hardwood, with a crawl space underneath. Because refrigerators were not common in 1923 -- they may not have even existed then -- and because ice for ice chests was seldom available on the ranch, the kitchens in the early homes had pantry cupboards reaching from floor to ceiling, with screened vents at top and bottom. These vents permitted air circulation and allowed some cooling since cooler air beneath the floor was pulled up through the ceiling vent. The pantries were used to store perishable foods.

As a convenience for the housewife who washed the family clothes herself, Lillian Rice provided a zinc laundry sink in a utility area next to the kitchens which she designed. Clothes were washed with a scrub board and hung outside to dry.

One of the most unusual features of these early homes on the ranch, unusual in 1923 that is, was that they were all-electric. Electricity was used for lighting, cooking, water heating, and room heating in rooms which did not have fireplaces. At that time, many rural homes in San Diego County had no electric service at all, and those which did have electricity only used it for lighting. Cooking and heating, including water heating, was accomplished on wood-burning or kerosene stoves. If no electricity was available, candles and kerosene lamps were used for home lighting.

The power companies were, of course, delighted with the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company's innovative use of electricity. The Company, as I remember, received an award of some type for this, and the ranch was cited as a glowing example for developers in other California areas to follow.

The La Flecha house was the first all-electric family residence to be completed and occupied in Rancho Santa Fe.

When living at the Lower Otay and Barrett dam sites, we had become used to what would now, even in construction camps, be considered primitive living conditions. For mother especially, the all-electric La Flecha house was luxury indeed. However, it did not take long to discover that electric room heating left something to be desired as it was available then. This was provided by plug-in electric heaters, moved from room to room as needed. It took hours for these small appliances to heat an entire room, and rooms of any size never were completely or evenly heated.

Of course it was sacrilege to even hint that sunny California could have cold weather, but this did not help much on frosty mornings or when a winter Santa Anna wind was howling through door and window cracks. During one of our usual unusually cold spells, my Grandmother Nelson came out from Wisconsin for a visit. After a few shivering days, she went back home in disgust to "a place where we know how to build warm houses". Despite all of her other abilities, space heating was a problem which Lillian Rice never solved.

When we joined father at the La Flecha house in July 1923, the Company was already well into an active property sales program, and father was much involved with this. California was experiencing a very active land boom at the time, its first general revival of real estate sales since the disastrous land boom of 1886-1887, during which my mother's parents had come to San Diego. For those who are interested in what happened then, I recommend Stuart Edward White's Rose Dawn, a book long out of print but available in some libraries. The chicanery of the '86 and '87 land booms became legendary, leading later to many reforms in California real estate law.

Though not all of these reforms had been adopted in 1923, the Company was very meticulous in dealing with its purchasers, and my father was always strictly ethical in all of his real estate dealings, which continued until his death in 1963. Since the sales program was often discussed at home in the La Flecha house, I became familiar with it even though I was still quite young then.

While the Company welcomed California buyers and made a number of early sales to them, its principal sales market in the early 1920s came from mid-western and eastern winter visitors. The period of late fall to early spring brought a majority of the land sales, and this continued until after World War II. Many of these purchasers looked toward later but not immediate retirement in California.

About 1921 or 1922, California discovered the avocado as a profitable source of income. Introduced from Mexico, avocados had been planted for many years in the Southern California coastal region as ornamentals. But the fruit was thought to be inedible and was commonly left to drop and rot on the ground. Suddenly Californians found that there was a market for avocados which would bring as much as a dollar a pound, a fabulous price then, and the rush to plant avocado orchards began just as Rancho Santa Fe property sales started.

For these winter visitors, "snowbirds" as we call them in South Texas, the Company offered the services of an orchard contractor who would plant and maintain a citrus or an avocado orchard on the purchased property. When retirement and home building time came, the orchard would be in production to provide a supplement to retirement income. This was before the time of tax shelters, but that later became a sales inducement too. Since this was both a sound and convincing proposal, most of the orchards on the ranch were first planted by absentee owners.

The first orchard contractor on the ranch was U. L. Voris, whose

business was later taken over by Volant and Bill Ballard. Two or three years later, Ray Badger also began orchard contracting, a business which his son, Charles, still continues on the ranch. As mentioned earlier, Voris first used the vacant area behind the La Flecha house for equipment storage. By 1924, this had been moved across the street to the block between Via de Santa Fe and La Granada, space which Badger shared later and took over entirely after the Ballards had both left, shortly before World War II.

Soon after we moved into the La Flecha house, Voris began to clear a ten acre parcel across the street for avocado and lemon planting, a property which was later cut into smaller plots and which is now entirely occupied by homes. As is the case on much of the ranch, the clay top soil on this property was shallow, with a hard pan underlay. The practice at that time was to blast out tree holes to enable root penetration in the underlying hardpan. While this blasting was going on, the windows and dishes in the La Flecha house rocked and rattled constantly. I was, of course, an interested observer and managed to acquire several of the sturdy wood boxes used to store dynamite which I then put to use for storing books and toys in my room in the house.

Rabbits, very plentiful on the ranch then, soon discovered that the tender bark of young orchard trees made a delicious meal. They became so much of an orchard pest that nearly everyone living on the ranch would drive the roads at night, spotting rabbits in car lights, and shooting them with shotguns. This went on right in the village streets as well as on outlying roads. Most of the automobiles then were open touring cars with running boards. The driver would go along slowly with someone standing on a running board, holding a shotgun and ready to jump off to shoot when rabbits were sighted. I often rode along as a passenger but was too young then to be allowed to shoot. That came later.

We did have a Victrola phonograph in the La Flecha house and a radio --I remember listening to Amos and Andy there. But we spent many evenings reading. We had books of our own, some of them still on my own bookshelves now, and subscribed to newspapers and periodicals. However, my parents were both voracious readers, and mother had taught me to read when I was five years old. By the time we arrived at the ranch, I was reading anything and everything available. We simply did not have enough to read, and the other families who soon began to join us were in the same circumstances.

Mother contacted the San Diego County Library and arranged for a deposit collection of some hundred books to be issued to her for borrower use at the La Flecha house, which then, in 1924, became the site of Rancho Santa Fe's first public library. This was a convenient location because everyone who lived on the ranch had to come to the village center to pick up mail and to buy groceries, available at a small store which the Company operated then in one of its village buildings. A county librarian



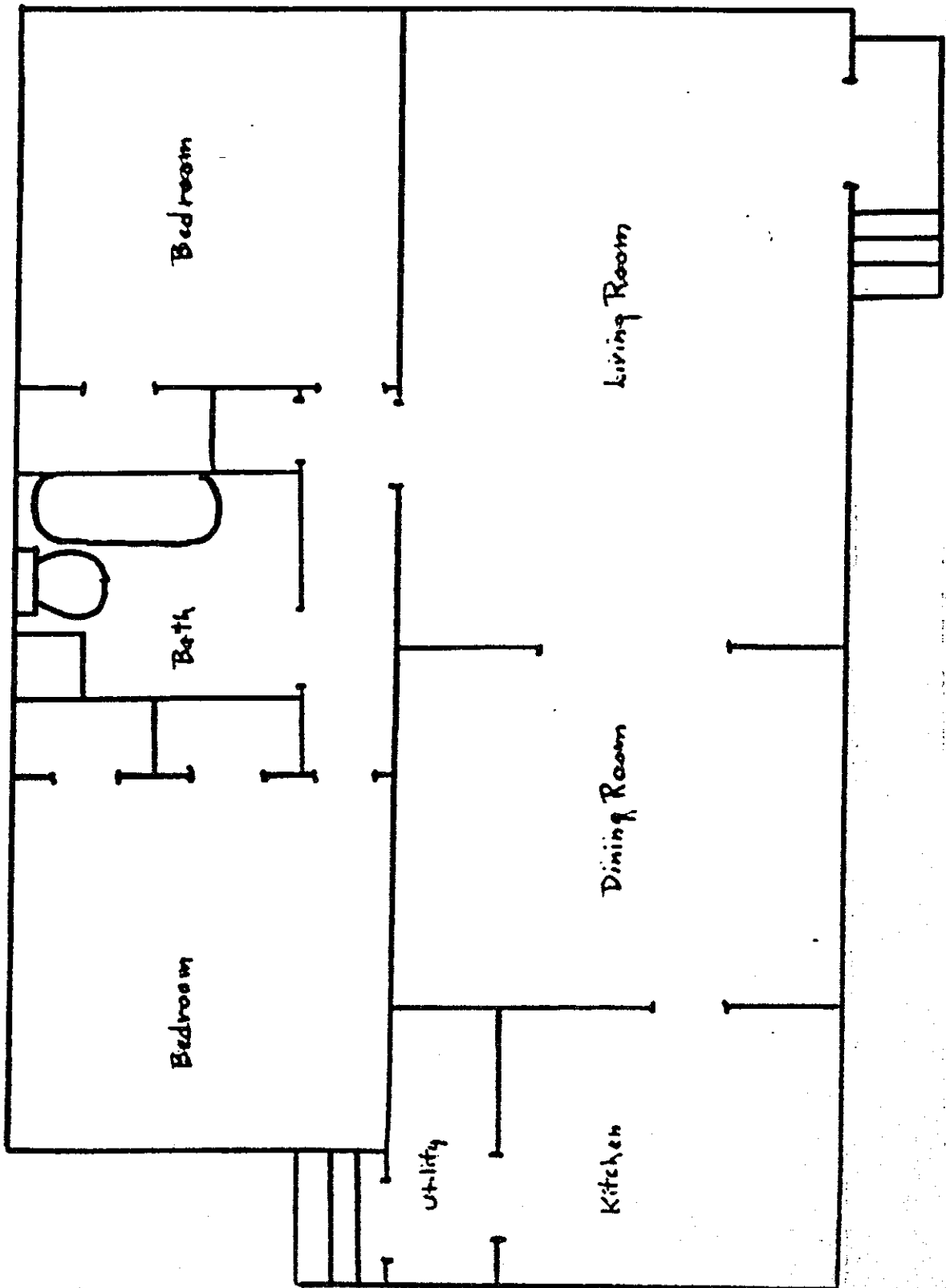
came by occasionally to exchange these books for others. Word of new book arrival went out through the efficient ranch grapevine telegraph, quickly bringing eager borrowers to the La Flecha house. When we moved to the house on Paseo Delicias, Louise Badger agreed to put this collection in her village fountain lunch where it remained for many years afterwards.

I have not been in the La Flecha house since we left it in late 1925, but I still remember much about it. The attached floor plan sketch is reasonably accurate, though not drawn to scale. It shows the house as I recall it now and as it was in 1923 to 1925. I would think that some alterations have since been made. I do not remember a fireplace in the house, but there may have been one in the living room, a usual feature of the homes which Lillian Rice designed.

I knew Lillian Rice of course, just as everyone knew everyone else on the ranch then, but I did not see her very often. When I did, she was always very pleasant but always very businesslike. My parents knew her very well.

My father and mother remained lifelong residents of the ranch, both very active in ranch affairs. Since we first lived as a family in the La Flecha house, I know that its designation as a historical landmark would be a tribute to their memory as well as to the memory of Lillian Rice, its architect.

Laredo, Texas  
1 September 1988



La Flecha

ADDENDUM TO:  
LA FLECHA HOUSE  
6036 La Flecha  
Rancho Santa Fe  
San Diego County  
California

HABS CA-2304  
*CAL, 37-RANSF, 2-*

PAPER COPIES OF COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001